

REMARKS

Claims 1-3 and 6-22 are pending. The amendments to the claims are all supported in the figures so no new matter is added.

The examiner objected to Claims 6-9, 17, and 18 in the present office action and in the previous office action dated April 8, 2003. Claims 6, 7, and 17 have been amended to be independent based on the claims as they appeared at the time of the April 8, 2003 office action. Accordingly, Claims 6, 7, 17, and their dependent Claims 8, 9, 16, and 18 are allowable.

The remaining independent Claims 1 and 15 have been amended to limit the red, green, and blue light guides to layers, each lying in a different plane. The examiner indicated that the Claims 1 and 15, before the current amendment, overcame the previously cited prior art. As will be seen below, the amendments overcome the present rejections.

The examiner rejected Claims 1-3, 12-15, and 20-22 as being obvious over the combination of Evanicky (U.S. Patent 6,243,068) and the newly cited Mori (U.S. Patent 6,288,700). As discussed in Applicants' responses to previous office actions, Evanicky couples a warm white light source to an edge of a light guide and a cooler white light source to an edge of a different light guide. The examiner indicated in the present office action that "Evanicky's light guides do not couple only red light or only blue light as recited in the instant claim."

The examiner newly cites U.S. Patent 6,288,700 to Mori for Mori's teaching of a single, integral flat panel having red, green and blue cylindrical light routes throughout the flat panel (col. 2, lines 16-19). Fig. 3 shows the routes lying in the same plane.

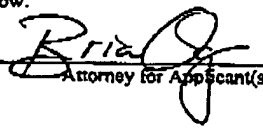
The amendments to the independent Claims 1 and 15 cause the claims to be patentable over the combination of Evanicky and Mori. Claims 1 and 15 now require each of the red, green, and blue light guides to be a layer in a different plane. Mori's teaching of applying red, green, and blue LEDs to light guides in the same plane could not suggest to replace Evanicky's warm and cool white light sources because the Evanicky invention is directed to combining the warm and cool white light to generate a desired white light color

temperature. Combining Mori and Evanicky would destroy the functionality of both their inventions. Further, Evanicky is strictly limited to a maximum two light guides (one a minimum color temperature and the other a maximum color temperature), and there could be no suggestion to add another light guide to the Evanicky backlight.

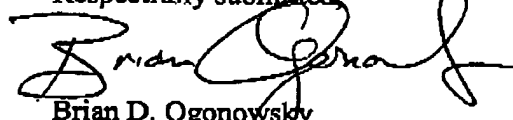
Since the remainder of the rejected claims are dependent on Claims 1 and 15, all claims are respectfully submitted to be allowable. None of the other art cited by the examiner suggests at least the independent Claims 1 and 15.

Regarding dependent Claims 11 and 19, directed to the light guides being transparent sheets, the examiner additionally relies on publication JP-2000171796 to Howan. The Howan backlight appears to be in a single plane and simply mixes the light from the LEDs and energizes a fluorescent layer. This is very different from Applicants' amended claims. It is not clear whether the Howan LEDs are all the same UV LEDs that energize a fluorescent layer, but that is a reasonable assumption.

In view of the above arguments, Applicants respectfully request allowance of all pending claims. Should the Examiner have any questions, the Examiner is invited to call the undersigned at (408) 382-0480 ext. 202.

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|  Attorney for Applicant(s) | <u>12/3/03</u> Date of Signature |

Respectfully submitted,


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